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BASTIER, PAUL: LA NOUVELLE INDIVIDUALISTE EN ALLEMAGNE. De Goethe à Gottfried Keller. Essai de Technique Psychologique. Paris 1910. 452 pp. 8°.

The importance of this book resides in the fact that it is the first serious attempt on the part of a foreigner to describe and define the German *Novelle* as a distinct art-form.

The German *Novelle*, it may be well to state parenthetically, differs in principle from the novel (*Roman*) not only in length (in fact some *Novellen* are as long as short novels), but in its most essential nature. Nor is it like the American short-story, in which, through the influence of Poe, great stress is laid upon mere brevity. In the *Novelle*, the compactness derives from the peculiar angle from which the character or the situation is visualized. Some of the richest minds and greatest literary artists of Germany have expressed their interpretation of the world through their *Novellen*, and have created works of narrative art of the highest order. Of all this foreign criticism has so far been unaware.

Bastier's book is divided into three parts: I. "Étude objective de la Nouvelle." II. "Le Nouvelliste." III. "Conclusions." Of these, the first is the most valuable. Throughout the book the author aims to prove that the *Novelle* as a distinct type was established before the middle of the nineteenth century, i. e. before the advent of the great modern *Novellisten*, Heyse, Storm, Keller, Meyer, etc.

Ch. I, "La Nouvelle et la Littérature Allemande du XIX Siècle," shows that during the period of the Romantic School, the short narrative enjoyed enormous vogue. Hence the immense popularity of the *novellas* of the Italian Renaissance, of the French *nouvelles*, of the "Novelas Exemplares" of Cervantes. Much confusion prevailed and all sorts of prose works masqueraded as "Novellen."

In Ch. II, "La Définition essentielle de la Nouvelle," B., after considering various definitions of the *Novelle* offered by men like Goethe, Tieck, Heyse, Spielhagen, etc., concludes that Goethe, in a conversation with Eckermann in 1827, formulated the essentials. To Goethe a *Novelle* meant "eine sich ereignete, unerhörte Begebenheit" (an extraordinary but real event). From this B.—with what I feel to be rather too great liberality of interpretation—derives—thème unique; unité d'intérêt; singularité et vérité de l'action; aspect historique, périmé de cette action; et enfin sous-entendu: récit de cette action" (p. 41). (Heyse's demand for a turning-point—"Wendepunkt"—for every good *Novelle*, B. rejects as over-

dogmatic). It follows that the length or shortness is a matter of secondary importance. To quote B. (p. 46): "La longueur de la Nouvelle est contingente... Une nouvelle pourra être très longue, sans cesser d'être une, singulière... Le volume, le nombre de pages n'a pas, pour la Nouvelle, plus d'importance spécifique que pour la peinture la grandeur de la toile."\*

The preference for the idiosyncratic, the strange, the out-of-the-way, which lies at the root of the *Novelle*, was bound to attract the members of the Romantic School. Yet very few of their tales are true *Novellen* or may claim great importance. This B. lays to their love of mere mystification, and, as he brings out elsewhere, to their lack of artistic self-discipline. Students of German literature must regret that these tales (by Tieck, Fouqué, Hoffman, etc.) are the only ones which—mainly through the work of Carlyle—have been introduced to English readers.

The German *Novelle*, B. next shows, modified the original Renaissance type to a greater extent than has been the case in France or in Spain (p. 71).

\*There is here more than a technical difference between the German *Novelle* and the short-story according to Poe. To Poe the short-story is essentially the vehicle for conveying a mood. He is, therefore, justified in demanding brevity in order that the mood of the reader be maintained unbroken. The German insists that the problem be viewed from a special visual angle, and demands concentration, but not necessarily brevity. The danger to which brevity may lead by impoverishing the content of the short-story appears from a remark by Professor Bliss Perry quoted with evident approval by Prof. Brander Matthews in his "The Short-Story. Specimens Illustrating its Development" p. 37: "Dealing only with a fleeting phase of existence, employing only a brief moment of time, the writer of the short-story 'need not be consistent; he need not think things through.' Herein we see where the short-story falls below the level of the larger novel. . . ." Moreover Professor Palmer Cobb's conclusions found in his essay "Edgar Allen Poe and Friedrich Spielhagen. Their Theory of the Short-Story" (Mod. Lang. Notes XXV, pp. 67ff.) are extremely misleading. He implies that Poe's theories as interpreted by Spielhagen (in books which appeared as late as 1883 and 1898) determined the nature of the German *Novelle*, and that Spielhagen became "the intermediary between Poe and those 'masters of the short-story' in Germany to whom Prof. Matthews refers" (p. 71). The only "masters" whom Prof. Matthews mentions by name are Auerbach ("Black Forest Tales") and Gustav Freytag ("the more sentimental tales") (see p. 399). The former are ranked low by German critics, and hardly pretend to be short-stories of the Poe type. And Freytag seems to have succeeded with infinite cunning in hiding his "sentimental tales." At least they are not to be found in his collected works nor, as far as I know, anywhere else. Moreover, it is to be noted, the German *Novelle*, as Bastier conclusively shows, was formulated before the advent of Poe. Kleist, the first powerful *Novellist*, died in 1811; Goethe's "Novelle" appeared in 1826; Droste-Hüllshoff published her "Judenbuche" in 1842, the very year in which Poe wrote his famous essay. Secondly, as we see above, the German *Novelle* is built on essentially different principles from Poe's.

In Ch. III, "Le sujet de la Nouvelle," the author, in order to prove how great a range of subjects the *Novelle* covered even before the middle of the century, discusses in detail and with fine literary sense ten genuine *Novellen* all written during this period: Goethe's "Prokurator," Kleist's "Marquise von O," and "Erdbeben," all akin, with variations, to the type of the Italian Renaissance novella; Goethe's "Novelle," which more than almost any other single work, symbolizes the author's whole philosophy of life; Droste-Hülshoff's "Judenbuche," in which for the first time is introduced a careful study of environment as a determining factor in character; Stifter's "Brigitta" and "Bergkry-stall" in which landscape plays an unprecedented part in the development of the story; Grillparzer's "Der arme Spielmann" and Mörike's "Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag," in both of which the striking element lies not in the events, but in the character of the heroes; and Ludwig's "Zwischen Himmel und Erde," which in length and complexity of problem far outstrips its predecessors.

This selection is on the whole very happy. These *Novellen* exhibit great range of subjects, variations of length, and, what is more important, a gradual shifting of interest from external action to psychological development, and are all obedient to those principles which, as Bastier has shown, are basic for the German *Novelle*.

In Ch. IV, "L'action de la Nouvelle," B. introduces a detailed comparison between Goethe's "Prokurator" and its source "Le sage Nicaise ou l'Amant vertueux," the last of the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles." In opposition to other commentators, including the meticulous Düntzer, B. makes evident that Goethe, so far from contenting himself with a mere translation of his source, gives to the old tale by means of little touches and changes in almost every line, concentration and psychological motivation. Thus these two modern elements were introduced into the German *Novelle* as early as 1795 by its first powerful representative.

Ch. V, "Les Caractères et la Caractéristique dans la Nouvelle," insists that the *Novelle*, more than any other form of literary art, demands elimination and concentration. This demand necessitates technical short-cuts which neither the *Roman* (novel) nor the *Erzählung* (tale) requires. Some of these are: characteristic words ("mots-racines du caractère" p. 235), characteristic acts ("actes racines" p. 238), gestures (p. 239), and—he might have added—what the Germans call "stumme Rede" (significant silences), all tending to throw a strong lime-light on the center of the problem. More instances derived from the *Novellen* discussed in Chapter III

would have been helpful to the reader. B. emphasizes that the *Novelle* has only apparent similarity with the novel (*Roman*), whereas in structure it is intimately allied to the drama. For, while the object of the *Roman* is to show the character slowly developing as the result of the actions, both the drama and the *Novelle* show the reaction of the finished character upon stimuli from without. B. makes a very fine differentiation between the nature of the action called forth in the drama and that called forth in the *Novelle*. In the former, the hero responds with an habitual, characteristic act. (We need but think of "Macbeth," "Wallenstein," "Enemy of the People," etc.). In the *Novelle*, the unheard-of event takes the hero by surprise, and in the "sauve-qui-peut" (as B. aptly calls it) the response comes from some hitherto dormant trait ("Kohlhaas," "Schimmelreiter," "L' Arrabbiata," etc.). The only point of criticism on this suggestive passage would be that B. rather dogmatically attributes this characteristic to all German *Novellen*, while it is true essentially only of what we may call "dramatic" *Novellen*.

Ch. VI, "L'Idée dans la Nouvelle," and ch. VII, "La conception de la Nouvelle," though containing some interesting details, seem to me to offer little of striking importance.

In Ch. VIII, "La Composition de la Nouvelle," B. discusses with care the manner in which the concentration necessary to the *Novelle* is brought about. Significant instances of this concentration by means of elimination are to be found in Droste-Hülshoff's "Die Judenbuche" and Grillparzer's "Der arme Spielmann." As a lyricist, Droste-Hülshoff ranks among the most felicitous nature-poets. In her *Novelle* she omits all nature-painting not absolutely german to the action, and Grillparzer, in his "Arme Spielmann" makes but sparing use of that wealth of phrasing which lends glow to his dramas (pp. 382f.).

In Ch. IX, "L'Effet dans la Nouvelle," the author brings out that distinction between the *Novelle* and the *Roman* which resides in the fact that in the former the problem is carefully isolated, although thrown into relief against a larger background. However, B. seems to me to lay exaggerated emphasis upon the value of the unity of time and place for this purpose (p. 386).

Ch. X, "Conte et Nouvelle," contrasts the *Novelle* with the *Erzählung* (tale). The latter, though it may be admirable in its way, need not show the concentration of plot which marks the *Novelle*, or may be more loosely constructed, or may be merely a sketch. Instances of looseness are furnished by many of the "Romanticists," and exaggerated brevity, which gives us the skeleton of a *Novelle* rather than a finished work of

art, are found among the stories of the "Young Germans," for instance Laube, Gutzkow, etc.

Ch. XI, "La Valeur Ethnique de la Nouvelle Individualiste," sums up many of the results which B. has attained throughout the book. He once more emphasizes the fact that a good *Novelle*, so far from being merely an abbreviated *Roman*, or an enlarged episode thereof, is a highly specialized art-form, requiring of its author complete maturity of intellect and technique, and a serious conception of life. The most important development which the German *Novelle* shows during the nineteenth century is the gradual deflection of interest from the striking event to the striking personality.

Here B. seems to me to fail to furnish the explanation for the efflorescence and importance of the *Novelle* in Germany towards which his chapter-heading "ethnical" seems to point. The center of every *Novelle* worthy of the name is, as we have seen, a striking situation which calls out idiosyncrasy of character. *The Novelle* must, therefore, of necessity endear itself to a nation as fundamentally idiosyncratic as are the Germans. Moreover, the exuberance of the German character, which is so largely responsible for the richness of German culture, has, when unchecked, at times lead to artistic inadequacy. A striking illustration is furnished by the works of Jean Paul, those formless treasure-troves of fertile intuitions. When checked by severe and definite laws, as in the drama and especially in the *Novelle*, this same exuberance has helped to bring forth works of a very high order. Hence the *Novelle* would appear to be the organic literary expression of a people to whom laws governing the very details of domestic and civic life instinctively appeal as a necessary check to inherent exuberance, and ineradicable individualism.

This book, in spite of a certain lack of skill in arrangement, and on occasional tendency to dogmatize, is to be welcomed as giving valuable insight into the character and formation of the German *Novelle*. A historical treatment of the subject, dealing with all its important exponents, from Goethe to Schnitzler would help to call attention to the value of the German *Novelle* as a vital contribution to modern literature, and one with which English criticism has as yet dealt but scantily.

Following are a few details which suggest themselves in connection with points raised by the author. Pp. 15ff. The confusion between *Novelle* and *Roman* was encouraged, in my opinion, by the appearance of the German translations of Scott's "Waverly Novels." These were often called "Waverly Novellen." (See for instance Köpke, "Tieck," II, p. 44).

P. 17. An additional proof of the immense popularity of the *Novelle* in Germany before 1850 is furnished by a little publication entitled "Novellenkranz," Paris 1840, the purpose of which was to introduce Frenchmen to the spirit of German Literature.

P. 18. It would have been worth while to give a more detailed list of translations from the Italian, Spanish, and French tales, to show the close affinity between the early German *Novellen* and their models. As early as 1823, in other words more than ten years before Bülow, Rumohr put out his volume "Italienische Novellen von historischem Interesse." Furthermore, the Decamerone was used to an extraordinary extent at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. Miss F. N. Jones's pamphlet, "Boccaccio and his Imitators in German, English, French, Spanish, and Italian Literature. The Decameron." Chicago, 1910 and J. B. E. Jonas's review of it in "The Journ. of Eng. and Germ. Phil." Vol. X, pp. 105ff, would have furnished excellent material.

P. 35 (also pp. 313, 314). In commenting on the didactic element of the *Novelle*, a brief history of its development in the course of the centuries would have been helpful. In the Middle Ages, the short tale often pretended to a moralizing content. The same tendency appears all through the Renaissance; so for instance, Decamerone I, 5; X, 8, etc.; Sacchetti, Cervantes, etc.). In the eighteenth century, in consequence of the rise of the middle-class literature, which was to contribute not merely to amusement but to moral uplift, this didactic tendency became a passion. Instances are: Defoe's preface to "Moll Flanders," Lillo's "London Merchant," Richardson's novels: the "Moralische Wochenschriften;" Gellert's works; Alfieri's insistence on "the literary tribunes forming the conscience of the nations" are cases in point. In France appeared "Poèmes moraux," "Discours moraux," "Bagatelles morales," etc., etc. In fields outside of literature the same trend comes to the surface, as appears from Hogarth's pictures, and, last but not least, from an utterance in Jonathan Richardson, the painter and art-critic's essay "On the Whole Art of Criticism in Relation to Painting" (1719). Here the author declares that he would not hesitate to pronounce a picture excellent, though faulty in drawing, if it filled the mind with noble and instructive ideas. In this atmosphere a "moral" element in the tale was bound to become prominent. Hence the immense sway of "moral" stories, the most famous of which are, of course, the "Contes moraux" of Marmontel. The German *Novelle* inherited this proclivity. In Goethe's "Unterhaltungen," in Brentano's

"Kasperl und Annerl" it remains unobstructive. In Kleist, who published his first *Novellen* as "moralische Erzählungen," it is not much more than a convention. Keller's exceedingly felicitous use of it shows us how the German *Novelle*, in the course of its evolution, managed to turn into an organic element what had so often been a pedantic accessory.

P. 41. Although I agree with B. in regarding Goethe's definition as on the whole the most satisfactory, I feel that care should be exercised in accepting it without criticism. After all, Goethe, like other critics of his day, bases his definition on the type of "novellas" found in the Italian Renaissance, especially in Boccaccio. A. W. Schlegel, for instance, expresses the idea of "unerhörte Begebenheit" in virtually the same terms. "In der Novelle musz etwas geschehen. Ein dreister energischer Charakter der Sitten ist ihr daher vortheilhaft, und es laesst sich mehr als bezweifeln, ob es in Zeiten, wo das Leben sich in lauter Kleinlichkeiten zerbroeckelt.... moeglich sein duerfte, eine solche Masse von Novellen aufzubringen, die in unsern Sitten gegruendet and der Denkart des Zeitalters angemessen waeren, als die unter den Boccacischen sind, welche einen historischen Grund haben und das damalige Zeitalter schildern." (Vorlesungen ueber schoene Litteratur und Kunst, 1803-4, Seufferts Litteraturdenkmale, Bd. 19, p. 245). B. furthermore, to my sense, underrates the contribution of Heyse, who by insisting on a firm technique ("scharfe Silhouette") has done much for the formal perfection of the German *Novelle*. On the other hand B. is right in rejecting Heyse's "Wendepunkt" as non-essential. Heyse, like everybody else—including Goethe and Hebbel—spoke pro domo.

P. 263. In connection with the discussion on the affinity between drama and *Novelle* it may not be amiss to recall that Tieck divided one of his *Novellen*—"Die Vogelscheuche"—into acts and scenes, and in the "Prolog" apologizes for not prefixing a "dramatis personae," "da diese Novelle zugleich ein Dramaist." Yet the difference in principle between this purely mechanical superimposition of the dramatic form upon a tale which is essentially undramatic, and the inherent dramatic quality of Kleist's closely-knit *Novellen*, like "Die Marquise von O," is obvious.

P. 414. In treating the difference between the *Novelle* and the tale on the one hand and the mere sketch on the other, B. might well have contrasted Laube's "Die Novelle," conspicuous for flimsiness and superficiality, with Goethe's "Novelle," distinguished for carefulness of workmanship and for "sens profond," and might have pointed out that in the "Deutsche Rundschau," for January, 1907, a great modern German narrator, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, in an article



entitled "Novellenstoffe" in delightful fashion illumines the difference between the raw material for a *Novelle* and the finished product.

Inasmuch as B. subconsciously conceives the *Novelle* in terms of the "dramatic" *Novelle*, it seems strange that he nowhere mentions the dissertation by H. Becker "Kleist and Hebbel. A comparative Study" Chicago, 1904, which in the discussion of the technique of that type of *Novelle* anticipates many of B.'s results.

A misleading typographical error occurs in note 2, p. 65. The passage from the "Farbenlehre" is to be found in "Abteilung" 2.

The usefulness of this book would have been greatly increased by an index.

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LUISE ZURLINDEN: GEDANKEN PLATONS IN DER DEUTSCHEN ROMANTIK. Untersuchungen zur neueren Sprach- und Literatur-Geschichte, herausgegeben von Professor Dr. Oskar F. Walzel. Neue Folge. VIII. Heft, pp. VIII + 292. H. Haessel Verlag in Leipzig. 1910.

Fräulein Zurlinden has undertaken a most interesting study, the influence direct or indirect of Plato upon the Romantic movement in Germany, and it comes out at a peculiarly apposite moment when three of the leading classical philologists of Germany and Russia, Crusius, Immisch and Zielinski have just announced a significant series of studies in the same general field, entitled "*Das Erbe der Alten*." From the viewpoint of *Kulturgeschichte* her essay would have had more significance had she been able to trace the channels through which Plato affected Romanticists, for it is only in a limited degree, of course, that any but a select few (such as Schleiermacher and the Schlegels particularly) could have come in direct contact with him through first hand knowledge of his own works. This she makes no attempt to do (cf. Vorw. p. VI) and we can hardly take it amiss, for such a study would indeed have involved a sketch of the whole intellectual development of Europe since the Renaissance.

Interesting as is the subject, it is even more elusive and difficult. It would be hard to find terms which more successfully defy scientific definition than just "Romanticism" and "Platonism." Almost anything may be postulated of Romanticism and be substantiated in some measure at least out of its manifold ramifications, and the same is to an even higher degree true to Platonism. The case is simpler if we restrict